

STATE SENATOR • HANSEN CLARKE • 1ST DISTRICT

Clarke Press Release

P.O. Box 30036 • Lansing • Michigan • 48909-7536 • 517-373-7346 • Fax: 517-373-5338
E-mail: senhclarke@senate.michigan.gov • www.senate.michigan.gov/dem/SD01



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
FEBRUARY 28, 2005**

**CONTACT: SEN. HANSEN CLARKE
PHONE: 517/373-7346**

CLARKE: DETROIT'S STUDENTS DESERVE BETTER *MDP'S DEFICIT ELIMINATION PLAN MUST EQUATE TO BETTER SCHOOLS*

LANSING, MI-- State Sen. Hansen Clarke (D-Detroit) is asking the Michigan Department of Education to impose additional conditions on the Detroit Public School District's deficit elimination plan. Clarke indicated he would like minimum standards written into the agreement that would guarantee the new district is not just smaller- but better.

"Detroit's parents will accept a leaner school district only as long as it equates to a better school district," said Sen. Clarke. "The state should seize this unique opportunity by demanding the district meet minimum standards that will ultimately improve the quality of education in Detroit."

Clarke would like to see the reorganized school district be required to provide smaller class sizes, better trained teachers, and adequate supplies, equipment, and library resources. Clarke is asking the Department of Education to require Detroit Public Schools to present an annual report on how the district is meeting these standards.

"Our children need permanent solutions rather than just stopgap measures," said Sen. Clarke. "We must do everything we can to improve the quality of life for Detroit's families and give parents every reason to remain invested in Detroit's future."

At a press conference this afternoon, Sen. Clarke also renewed his call to convert some of the Detroit public schools scheduled for closing into facilities that will provide services to local neighborhoods. Sen. Clarke's proposal will convert buildings into family care and development centers to provide neighborhood services including educational instruction, after-school programs, job training, health-related services, day care, and recreational activities. The Senator is approaching state and local officials, as well as non-profit foundations, to find ways to put these facilities back to work for the community.